

FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

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SENATOR NELSON INTERVIEWED

HUGH DOWNS: "Well, the revelations about the Central Intelligence Agency subsidizing private organization have ceased for the time being. Their implications still disturb many members of Congress.

"One Senator, Democrat Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, has expressed his concern in the broader context of whether the CIA actions are symptomatic of a passing acceptance of police state tactics.

"Well, Senator Nelson is in our Washington studio this morning to discuss his concern with NBC News Correspondent Sander Vanocur.

"Gentlemen."

VANOCUR: "Thank you, Hugh.

"Senator, isn't it a rather broad statement to charge that the CIA revelations are symptomatic of acceptance of police state tactics?"

NELSON: "Well, my statement was -- covered a much broader area than the recent revelations that the CIA was funding a number of domestic citizen organizations, such as the National Student Association, and labor organizations.

"In my statement on the floor of the Senate, I referred to a broad aspect of various kinds of things, including this activity by the CIA domestically -- including the widespread use of telephone taps, electronic surveillance of citizens in this country by agencies of the Federal Government...."

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VANOCUR: "How widespread is this?"

NELSON: "Well, some 30 to 40 Federal agencies do eavesdropping, gumshoing, telephone taps on citizens.

"The Treasury Department, for example, has been bugging, telephone tapping tax payers.

"Food and Drug Administration is doing it.

"Some 30 to 40 agencies -- I think it's a -- then you move over into the private field, and you have industrial corporations, who are using devices of various kinds to do industrial spying, to find out what their competition is doing.

"So, there'll be a meeting in New York, and one corporation will hire a private detective agency to electronically eavesdrop in on what the conference is doing.

"Then you've got private detective agencies being hired by private citizens to spy on somebody for some purpose, or another.

"I think this -- and with the new sophisticated devices that are now available, this is -- you can bug somebody's phone, or somebody's house, and wire tap them, and record everything that's said in the room, where ever the device is kept.

"And I think to permit this to continue is a very dangerous, corrosive thing to the fabric of a free society.

"And what I said in my speech is that these are -- these are police state tactics, which they are. This is 'Big Brother' stuff, where...."

VANOCUR: "If the government encourage it by the CIA tactics, is it the dishonesty, or the ethics of it that bother you?"

NELSON: "Well, I don't think you can put them all in one package.

"In the CIA case, the disturbing thing was that for many years now, unbeknownst to the general public -- unbeknownst to the Congress itself, excepting for a very small handful of Con-

gressmen in the National Security Council, the CIA has been funding various organizations."

NELSON: "The first to be surfaced to the news was the National Student Association. It's a very fine organization.

"But, if we want to afford an opportunity for our students to attend international conferences, which, I think, we should, why secretly fund the organization?

"It destroys the credibility of the organization. Most of the members didn't know that they were being funded in that way.

"If we want the students to go to international conferences, why shouldn't the Congress appropriate the money, authorize it to the HEW, Health, Education, and Welfare, have them fund the universities -- fund the students to attend international conferences?

"If we want -- the CIA was funding some labor unions to teach the free labor movement in Europe.

"Why should the CIA do that? It's a perfectly honorable, above board matter. Why shouldn't the Labor Department do that?

"The tragic part was that this was secretly done, and now it's become a matter of international knowledge, and destroys the credibility."

VANOCUR: "There's something peculiar to us at this stage of our development as a society -- that we love all this secrecy.

"That the fad for 'James Bond', and private eyes, and the rest of that -- we really like the secrecy of the whole business."

NELSON: "Well, apparently a lot of people like the secrecy of the whole business. But, I think, it's a very, very dangerous, serious matter.

"You can take a little tiny device two, or three inches square, and stick it in your pocket, leave your recording device in your automobile, walk into anybody's office, or home, and everything that's said be recorded out on the street a half a mile away -- or you can leave it behind -- hide it -- put it in somebody's car.

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"This stuff is used extensively by government agencies, private agencies, private detectives. Blackmail comes out of the matter -- out of this. Everybody becomes worried about whether you've got privacy.

"And, I think, the most serious threat that you can have to any free society is an unlimited invasion of people's privacy. Privacy is a very dear thing. And, if you allow it to be invaded, you destroy the very fabric of freedom itself."

VANOCUR: "What are you urging -- people to just refuse cooperation, and tell these people to go away, when they come snooping around?

"Are you for legislation to bar these invasions of privacy?"

NELSON: "We had legislation 30 years ago to prohibit wire tapping.

"It's been violated time after time, after time, by our own government.

"The President became so concerned about this that has now recommended to the Congress in his recent message that we outlaw all eavesdropping, and wire tapping, with serious criminal penalties, excepting in cases of national security.

"And I think if we don't do that, we're going effectively, and substantially destroy freedom in this country."

VANOCUR: "Thank you very much.

"We've been discussing with Senator Gaylord Nelson the revelations about the CIA, and invasions of privacy in this society.

"Now back to 'Today' in New York."

DOWNES: "Thank you, Sandy, and Senator Nelson."